



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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NEWS RELEASE

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Corps completes levee rehab work in Forsyth, Mont.

Billings, Mont.—Levee rehabilitation work in Forsyth, Mont. is complete two weeks ahead of schedule and prior to the start of the 2011 runoff season, officials with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, announced today.

Rapid snowmelt that took place during last year's record runoff season resulted in high water events that eroded approximately 400 feet of the riverbank to the toe of the levee. Construction crews have been working round-the-clock schedules, as needed, to complete the work before March 1, the start of the runoff season.

"This is great news because the levee is now prepared to protect city and county resources in the event the area, and the basin, experience another high runoff season," says Chief of Emergency Management Kim Thomas. "We've had crews out there working since December to beat the clock. The Corps, the city and the county are all extremely happy to have the work completed prior to the start of the runoff season, and we're equally pleased with the quality of work."

Left unrepaired, the damaged portions of the levee might have otherwise exposed the public and local infrastructure to considerable risk.

The Corps conducts regular inspections of federal levees throughout the Missouri River Basin. These levees are maintained and operated by local public sponsors. Those inspections identified the most critical levee segments needing restoration in the aftermath of the 2010 runoff season, including Forsyth, Mont.

For fiscal year 2011, Congress allocated \$66 million toward the Corps levee rehabilitation efforts. The Corps coordinates levee repairs with federal, state and local agencies. In order to take advantage of rehabilitation funding, the levees must be covered under the Public Law 84-99 Rehabilitation and Inspection program during the time that the structure is damaged. The act is part of the Flood Control and Coastal Emergency Act.

"Normally, restoring levees could take a year or longer to make it through the design process," said Thomas. "This emergency process has provided us the leeway to get the project scoped, contract awarded and completed in a little more than two months."

Rehabilitation work at Forsyth totaled \$480,000 and entailed strengthening weak areas of the levee and moving it landward to restore the structure to its original design and authorized level of protection.

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